

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A method for providing information for a user interface having
2 included therein a plurality of regions, the method comprising:
3 defining a plurality of slice locations for a guide region of the user
4 interface, wherein each slice location corresponds to a respective area and location in the
5 guide region;
6 associating a plurality of guide slices for each of at least one slice location
7 in the guide region;
8 encoding one or more guide slices for each slice location in the guide
9 region; and
10 transmitting one or more encoded guide slices for each slice location in the
11 guide region.

1 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
2 associating one guide slice for each slice location in the guide region not
3 associated with a plurality of guide slices.

1 3. The method of claim 1, wherein a plurality of sets of guide slices are
2 transmitted for the plurality of slice locations in the guide region.

1 4. The method of claim 3, wherein the plurality of sets of guide slices are
2 transmitted via time division multiplexing.

1 5. The method of claim 3, wherein one set of guide slices is transmitted
2 for each group of pictures (GOP).

1 6. The method of claim 3, further comprising:
2 time-stamping each set of guide slices for presentation at a designated
3 time.

1 7. The method of claim 3, wherein at least one set of guide slices
2 comprises a partial set of guide slices in the guide region.

1 8. The method of claim 3, wherein the plurality of sets of guide slices are
2 transmitted with a common packet identifier (PID).

1 9. The method of claim 3, wherein each of the plurality of sets of guide
2 slices is transmitted with a respective packet identifier (PID).

1 10. The method of claim 1, wherein the transmitting includes
2 continually transmitting a first set of guide slices for the plurality of slice
3 locations in the guide region.

1 11. The method of claim 10, wherein the transmitting further includes
2 transmitting one or more additional guide slices at a designated time

1 12. The method of claim 11, wherein the one or more additional guide
2 slices are transmitted in response to a received request for the additional guide slices.

1 13. The method of claim 1, wherein the guide slices transmitted for the
2 guide region are intra-coded.

1 14. The method of claim 1, wherein each transmitted guide slice includes
2 a header indicative of a start location and a stop location for the guide slice.

1 15. The method of claim 1, wherein each transmitted guide slice includes
2 a guide listing for a particular channel in the user interface.

1 16. A method for providing information for a user interface, comprising:
2 defining a plurality of slice locations for at least a portion of the user
3 interface, wherein each slice location corresponds to a respective area and location in the
4 user interface;
5 associating a plurality of slices for each of at least one slice location in the
6 user interface;
7 encoding one or more slices for each slice location in the user interface;
8 and

9 transmitting one or more encoded slices for each slice location in the user
10 interface.

1 17. The method of claim 16, wherein the one or more encoded slices for
2 each slice location includes guide data for an interactive program guide.

1 18. A method for providing a user interface having included therein a
2 plurality of regions, the method comprising:
3 receiving a bitstream comprising packets for a plurality of slices for a
4 guide region of the user interface, wherein each slice is designated for presentation at a
5 particular slice location in the guide region, and wherein multiple slices are transmitted
6 for each of at least one slice location in the guide region;
7 retrieving from the bitstream packets for a set of slices for the guide
8 region; and
9 decoding the retrieved packets to form the guide region of the user
10 interface.

1 19. The method of claim 18, wherein a plurality of sets of slices are
2 received for the guide region, the method further comprising:
3 decoding packets for the plurality of sets of slices; and
4 presenting the plurality of sets of slices in the guide region at times
5 designated by the a header associated with the slices.

1 20. The method of claim 18, wherein the plurality of sets of slices are
2 presented in the user interface via time division multiplexing.

1 21. The method of claim 18, further comprising:
2 receiving a user selection for a particular slice location of the guide region;
3 retrieving from the bitstream packets for an additional slice associated with
4 the selected slice location; and
5 decoding the retrieved packets for the additional slice to form an updated
6 user interface having included therein the additional slice.

1 22. The method of claim 18, wherein each slice includes a header
2 indicative of a start location and a stop location for the slice.

1 23. The method of claim 22, wherein the header for each slice is a slice
2 start code defined by MPEG-2 standard.

1 24. The method of claim 22, wherein each decoded slice is presented at a
2 location identified by the header.

1 25. The method of claim 22, further comprising:
2 modifying a particular property of each of one or more decoded slices for
3 presentation at locations on the user interface different from locations identified by
4 headers of the decoded slices.

1 26. The method of claim 18, further comprising:
2 recombining the slices for the guide region with slices for at least one
3 additional region in the user interface.

1 27. The method of claim 26, wherein the recombining is performed in
2 accordance with a splicing syntax defined by MPEG-2 standard.

1 28. A method for providing a user interface, comprising:
2 receiving a bitstream comprising packets for a plurality of slices for the
3 user interface, wherein each slice is designated for presentation at a particular slice
4 location in the user interface, and wherein multiple slices are transmitted for each of at
5 least one slice location in the user interface;
6 retrieving from the bitstream packets for a set of slices for the user
7 interface; and
8 decoding the retrieved packets to form the user interface having included
9 therein the set of slices.

1 29. The method of claim 28, wherein the one or more encoded slices for
2 each slice location includes guide data for an interactive program guide.

1 30. A terminal configured to provide a user interface having includes
2 therein a plurality of regions, comprising:
3 a demodulator operative to receive and demodulate a modulated signal to
4 provide a transport stream;
5 a transport de-multiplexer coupled to the demodulator and operative to
6 receive and process the transport stream to provide a sequence of packets for a plurality
7 of slices for a guide region of the user interface, wherein each slice is designated for
8 presentation at a particular slice location in the guide region, and wherein multiple slices
9 are transmitted for each of at least one slice location in the guide region; and
10 at least one video decoder coupled to the transport de-multiplexer and
11 operative to receive and decode the sequence of packets to form the guide region of the
12 user interface.

1 31. The terminal of claim 30, further comprising:
2 a controller operative to receive a user selection for a particular slice
3 location in the guide region and to direct the transport de-multiplexer to retrieve, from the
4 transport stream, packets for an additional slice associated with the selected slice location,
5 and
6 wherein the at least one video decoder is further operative to decode the
7 retrieved packets for the additional slice to form an updated user interface having
8 included therein the additional slice.